



The Ten Grand

By Cleve Cartmill

YOU'D THINK a good hoofer with good-looking gams oughta be able to land something, with all the shows on Big Street. Yeah, you'd think.

But there I was, in front of Lindy's, reading the menu pasted on the other side of the glass. And drooling. It was in plain black type, and I could just see it. A big, juicy T-bone smothered in onions, so tender it'd fall apart if you said boo to it.

And me with one nickel in my purse. Subway fare home, no charge for the empty stomach.

The people inside were toying with their shrimp cocktails and other lah-di-dah items. Give me a steak, every time, with the onions fried till they're black and crisp. Mushrooms, sure. They're fine. But an onion, there's character.

Anyway, I read the whole menu, and my feet were killing me all the time. After I got down to the

Based on a radio script originally written for the CBS radio program *Suspense*

By

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chocolate mousse, I turned away and fell in with the after-theater crowd headed for the subway. In Times Square it's five p. m., and I'm being pushed down the stairs toward the turnstile. So I started to get my bag open to fish the nickel out of lipstick, compact and a couple of stamps stuck together. And then, I felt a yank, and no more purse.

Even before I let out a yell, I thought, what a dope it was that snatched *my* bag. Ye gods, it didn't even look like it might have a nickel in it, being year-before-last's.

I twisted around and saw a little guy with short legs making for the stairs.

"Stop!" I screeched. "Somebody stop that guy! He grabbed my purse!"

You know how people look when you throw 'em some new angle? Here they'd been crowding along, each one pondering about getting home, or how late it was, or what he was going to say to whoever was waiting up. This purse snatch was something unexpected.

They looked blank. Some jaws dropped open, and some faces looked a little embarrassed, and some looked like they were sore at me for yelling out loud. By the time the blankness started to shift to something more practical, the little short-legged guy had turned a corner and disappeared.

They began to turn, a few at a time, and some voices raised the tally-ho,

"Thief!" "Stop, thief!"
And other corny cracks.

Out of that whole crowd, only one guy did anything. All I could tell about him as he started out after the snatcher was that he was tall. And his legs were about twice as long as the thief's.

He disappeared around the corner, and by the time I pushed through the crush and reached it, doggone it, there he was, heading towards me with my purse swinging from one arm!

I gave him a complete gander before he got within speaking distance, and I liked what I saw. He was taller than I'd thought, with dark crispy hair that wasn't receding any, and deep brown eyes. His smile was all ivory and a yard wide. He had shoulders that didn't need to be padded. His suit was good tweed, and hung like he'd been born in it.

"This yours?" he said in a deep, mellow voice.

"Gee!" I said, and felt stupid. How to make bright conversation! "Gee! How can I ever thank you?"

I was topping myself.

"That's all right," he said. "Glad I could catch him."

"What happened to him?"

He shrugged. "Oh, there was a cop. He'll be taken care of. Say! Are you all right?"

"Me? Sure, sure. I'm okay." I gave with my special smile.

"You look kind of—pale. I guess it would've been tough, at that, losing your purse so late at night."

I gave him my Society Laugh. You know, soft and conveying the idea that it was really nothing, my deah.

"I don't know *why* you bothered," I murmured, flapping eyelashes. "Nothing but a nickel in it, anyway. I don't carry much with me when I'm out at night."

It didn't fool him. I saw that while I was still talking. His smile was amused.

"Well, good night," he said. He moved off, toward the turnstile.

So that was that. The luck of Gee-Gee Lewis. She meets a guy, not a pick up, mind you, meets him under romantic circumstances in the subway. So she waves her big blue eyes at him, gives him the old razzle-dazzle, and what happens? She doesn't even get his name.

I fell in behind him, well behind, and made for the turnstile again. I held on to my bag like it was gold plated, and this time I made it. I reached in to get my nickel, and my hand touched something—something big that wasn't there before.

I looked down.

There was a big roll of bills in my purse, and the one on the outside said 100, in the corner of it, I could see. There it was, 100, in white thick figures inside a squiggly circle. The whole roll was too big for me to reach around with one hand.

Not that I tried. I just stood there, with my jaw hanging down to my knees, looking at that terrific wad of dough.

"Well?" somebody snarled behind me. "Ya growin' there?"

I jabbed the nickel in the slot,

snapped my bag shut, and went on through. If it hadn't've been for the way New Yorkers get on subway trains, I'd never have made it.

I just let myself ride along with the crowd, kind of numb.

You're dyin', I thought. Hunger's gotcha, and you're on your last legs. Next you'll be hearin' choirs, and seein' halos.

But I *felt* all right. If I'd been seeing things, it seemed to me I'd feel funny. I didn't, except for the numbness. I didn't feel sick to my stomach, and my legs worked okay, and I was breathing the garlic, perfume, smoke, and the musty, cementy smell of dead air, just like always.

I got into a seat somehow, and everybody was rushing around as usual, crowding old ladies out of good places. Some character was whistling "Yankee Doodle" somewhere.

A little fat guy with blue jaws was in the seat beside me, and he gave me the eye as I sat down. But I just sat there, holding on to my bag like it had ten thousand dollars in it.

Maybe it did. That roll was awful big. But how did it get there? The purse snatcher? That would be kinda vise versa. The Sir Galahad that brought it back? But why?

I didn't get to go on with this line of thinking, because the little fat guy with blue jaws decided he'd try to make a score.

"Nice night, ain't it?" he said.

I bet he thought that one up all by himself. I didn't say nothing. The

guy was still whistling "Yankee Doodle," somewhere in the car.

"You the young lady, what got her poice snatched?"

Oh, well. "Yeah."

"Lucky thing you got it back, ain't it?"

"Yeah."

"Me," he said, "I always say it ain't lucky for a young lady, specially a good lookin' dame like you, to carry a lotta dough late at night."

So this was it. He put it there, did he?

Still, that didn't add up. How come I got a seat next to him? He was already there when I sat down.

Just happenstance? Not for my dough, or whoever it belonged to.

"Look here," I said. "I don't know who you are, or what it's all about. You can have it. You don't have to take it away from me. But it's gotta be right here, in front of everybody. Let's get that straight."

His eyes got big, and he scrooched over, away from me.

"Jeez!" he said. "I didn't mean —"

He got up. "This is my stop, and am I glad! G'bye, sister."

He slid out and beat it down the aisle as the train slowed down, with me kind of popeyed. Then I got it, and I could feel the blush spreadin' up around my ears. He didn't know anything about the money, and what he thought I must've meant was something else again.

I settled back to normal, and began breaking my head over how the

money got in my purse. If it wasn't all a pipe dream. If it was there—

I sneaked a look. It was there, all right. Bigger than I thought it was, with the century note on the outside. Maybe it was counterfeit. Maybe the crook that snatched my bag had a pocketful of hot dough, and got rid of it when Sir Galahad caught him. But as near as I could tell by looking, the dough was stuff you could buy groceries with. A steak, for instance.

I was lookin' as close as I could, and all of a sudden I lamped the edge of this white paper, in among the green stuff. I slipped it out careful, snapped the bag shut, and looked at it. It was a scrap of paper, like it had been tore off a newspaper, and there was writing on it that was hard to read.

"Get off at 163rd," it said, "and follow Yankee Doodle."

"Yankee Doodle!" I listened. Nobody was whistling. No more than three people at most could have stuck that note in there. The cop, the snatcher, and Sir Galahad.

The cop was out. He'd've been busy, and besides, cops don't go around putting money in people's purses. Not the way I heard it.

The purse-snatcher was a possibility, if the dough was hot. But *he* wouldn't write for me to get off anywhere. Because he was under arrest. He couldn't follow, and he couldn't get word to somebody else.

THAT left Sir Galahad, with the big dark eyes and the toothpaste

smile. I got to admit I didn't find the prospect exactly unpleasant. He looked like quite a boy, and maybe we could drum up something in the way of a beautiful friendship, as they used to say in books when they meant something else altogether.

But again, why? Why didn't *he* keep it on him? No cops was after *him*, that I could see. If they had been, he was a dope to take out after the thief, drawing attention to himself. If he wanted to get rid of the dough, he wouldn't have written a note.

So he wanted it back, and he wanted me to get off at 163rd, one stop before my own.

Then I had another idea. If he didn't want to get rid of it, the chances were it wasn't counterfeit. So what did *that* add up to?

It added up to this: somebody was after it, and he didn't want it on him if they should catch up with him. Why?

Well, there could be at least two reasons. One, he'd stolen it; two, to keep somebody else from stealing it.

I was willing to believe the best. Maybe, I told myself, he's somebody important, caught with a wad on him after banking hours, and somebody else has found out about it and started trailing him, hoping to get him in an alley and put the blackjacks to him.

That brought it down to me. What was *I* going to do about it?

While I was trying to decide, I heard the whistle again.

"Yankee Doodle!"

So he was on this car.

I looked around, but the aisles were crowded, and I couldn't see a familiar face. Of course, it might not *be* Sir Galahad.

So what was I going to do about it?

I could get off at the next stop and try to make a break. Ten grand! What wouldn't that do for Gee-Gee Lewis? It began to take shapes in my head.

Fur coat, yes. New shoes, silk underwear, a drawer full of nylons, an apartment on the West Side instead of a fifth-floor walk-up in the Bronx. With switchboard service, even.

"Miss Lewis? Mr. Van Courtland is in the lobby. Yes, the rich Mr. Van Courtland. Yes, I'll tell him to come up."

And a steak every day, smothered in onions, and lobster any time I wanted. Taxicabs. *Here, driver, keep the change.* Or my own car. *James, the town car please.*

Ten grand. Say, that was practically all the money in the world. And all I had to do was slip off the train, lose myself in the crowd, and it was mine.

There was that whistle again. "Yankee Doodle" . . . Whoever was whistling knew I was on this car, and would keep an eye on me.

Even if I couldn't see him by looking around, you could bet he had his eye on me. So what if I did get off, at 157th, say.

He'd be right behind me, and if

I tried to lose myself it would peeve him.

That kind of a trick might get me a knife in the back and a slab in the morgue.

The train roared along. I began to get scared. Suppose I got off at 163rd, just like I was told? Maybe he was a maniac, and this was his way of luring girls into dark streets.

One thing sure, this was a swell way to go crazy, thinking like this.

All of a sudden, I made up my mind. I'd do it the way the note said. Crazy or not, I'd do it. I couldn't get away with the dough without trouble, so I might as well take orders.

Besides, if it was Sir Galahad—well, who could tell what *that* might develop into . . . ?

"One-hundred an' sixty-third!" yelled the conductor.

I got off. The platform was full of nothing but people. I looked around, but with me being about two inches shorter than most, I couldn't see much. Then I heard the whistle. "Yankee Doodle."

I stood like I was the statue of General Sherman, trying to locate the direction—kinda hard, what with the street noises, and the train pulling out, and another one coming in, headed downtown. I finally decided the whistle was coming from my left, and I started towards it, when I heard it again, coming from my right.

I stopped. Two people were whistling, one on my left, one on

my right.

And then, darned if some guy close to me didn't start humming it!

That sure left me standing on one foot. You couldn't flip a coin to find which way to go, you'd have to play odd-man.

So I decided on the right. I had to push through a lot of people, but I didn't get any dirty looks; anybody that rides the subway is gonna get pushed around.

He was standing in a little clear space, and he wasn't Sir Galahad. But he was a pretty good looking guy. About six feet, with good clothes, a fresh haircut, and a chin with a cleft in it. He wasn't paying me any attention. While I watched, he headed for the stairs, whistling, and I fell in behind him.

On the street level, I caught up with him and nudged him. Then he turned and looked down at me.

He had blue eyes, and who am I to say brown eyes are better?

"Hello," I said.

"Hello," he answered, like he didn't know why he should. He looked at me close, then grinned.

"Why, hel-lo! Haven't seen you in a long time."

"No," I said. "Must be all of five minutes."

He frowned again, and shook his head a little. "How've you been, anyway?" he said.

"All right."

"And how's—" He stopped, put a finger to his chin and rolled his eyes off into space. "How's—what

was his name—Mortimer?"

Cues I'm getting, now. "He's fine," I said. "Old Mort never changes. You know."

He chuckled. "Yeah, I know. Still gets stinking, hey?"

"At the drop of a cork," I said.

He shook his head.

"That's Mort all over, all right. Say, that was some party, that last one. What happened to *you*? Go home early?"

This flip-flap of the mouth might be fun for somebody listening but I looked around and saw nobody was listening.

So why the act?

"Look," I said, "what do you want me to do with it?"

"Yep," he went on, paying no attention. "That was a party. J. R. really spread himself. You know, that must've cost you ten grand."

"All right, all right," I said. "You got yourself on record. What do I do with it?"

"With what, uh,—oh, I remember—Maizie?"

"My name ain't Maizie, an' I never saw you before. What . . . do I . . . do with it?"

His eyes got an expression something like the little fat guy's on the train, like he thought I had leprosy or something. He backed away a little. "Sorry," he mumbled. "Wrong person. Thought you were somebody—"

He turned and beat it.

The first thing that I thought of was here's my chance. I'd lost Yankee Doodle, it seemed. So all

I had to do now was turn right around and head downstairs again and take a subway to anywhere. The guy I'd pegged was just somebody who picked up the whistle automatically, like people do. So Yankee Doodle himself had gone on, expecting me to follow him . . .

Not for Gee-Gee. About face, down the—

I stopped. There it was again, the whistle.

Goose-flesh jumped up all over me. Even on my ears. I'd taken just one step down, and there it was. Whistling, no doubt, while he sighted down a barrel at a spot between my shoulder blades . . .

I turned right around again. Lead is so heavy, and I was trying to lose weight.

The whistle was coming from along 163rd, and I started after it. I still couldn't see anybody. What I mean is, I couldn't see anybody I knew among the crowds that milled along the street.

I followed the sound for two blocks. As I was crossing Jerome, I heard it off to my right.

It was a dark street; I didn't like it. So I had to make up my mind, was I going through with it or not? Get a bullet in the back, maybe?

I better go through with it.

I went on across the intersection and turned towards the whistle. It was blacker down that street than a Schiaparelli dinner dress, and I was shaking worse than six hangovers. I didn't know what was waiting, up

that street, unless it was Sir Galahad.

I'd gone about a hundred feet, I guess, when I heard the footsteps behind me.

It's a lot of eyewash to say your heart stops when you're scared. Mine jumped like a rabbit needled in the rear.

I stepped in behind a stoop and looked back. The whistling had stopped.

I couldn't see anybody, but I could hear the footsteps, and they weren't the steps of somebody hurrying home to the Little Woman; they were the steps of somebody tailing somebody. They were slow, and steady, and too quiet for comfort.

They came closer and closer. I was sandwiched in, front and rear. And not only that—

There were two people trailing me. I heard the other pair of feet hitting the pavement, across the street.

When they were twenty feet from me, I could see a slim little guy on my side of the street. Then I could see the other one across the street.

I shuddered back into the deep shadow, and turned my face to the wall. I was glad I hadn't had my hair bleached the week before like I'd planned but didn't have money to do. Blondes can do better in show business than brunettes, maybe, but they're not so easy to hide in the dark.

The feet passed, without even hesitating, and went on toward Sir Galahad. Not a sound from him; no more whistling. But it just had to

be him: he was the only one who could've stashed the wad in my bag. And now I knew—he did it because those two gorillas were after it.

So this was the end of it. All I had to do was take off my shoes, so they couldn't hear me, and run for the subway.

They were between me and Sir Galahad, and I could get away.

If he was the bright kind of a Joe that goes around putting money in people's purses I thought, he *deserved* to lose it. He'd whipped up this fine kettle of fish; let him stew in it.

Having reached this sensible decision, I took off my shoes, stepped out on the sidewalk, and started right out after the guys who had just passed.

My mind kept telling me I was the dope of the year, and wouldn't my name look swell in marble, and that little girls who got mixed up in messes could get awful messy, and all the time I kept right on going.

If Sir Galahad was in trouble, I had to help him if I could. Had to. Couldn't stop myself, somehow.

Tombstone, here I come.

I couldn't see anybody, but I could still hear the footsteps. I could hear my own bare feet slithering on the walk, and I synchronized them to the feet ahead of me. There was no sound except for the feet, and the far off rumble of the city.

That isn't exactly correct. There was one other sound: my heart—bump-bump, bump-bump!

So there we went, the two mys-

terious guys after Sir Galahad and me after them. I hadn't figured out what I was going to do. Pretend to be a mother quail, maybe, and flutter a wing at 'em and lead 'em away. To where? To a cop?

Excuse me, officer, but I was following these men, and I want 'em flung in the jug.

That would go over big. Well, why *was* I along on this clambake? I was strong and healthy, and could probably defend my honor, whatever that is, in a pinch, but I wasn't a match for a fullgrown man with murder on his mind. So I pick two, maybe three, to do in the eye.

Brilliant, that's what it was, walking along with my shoes in my hand. Heading for what? I might as well have been walking inside a black cat, for all I could see.

It's all very well to say it this way, but actually the scene was getting to me. At me, really. I says to myself, Gee-Gee, what in the name of God are *you* doing here? As far as you know, either one of these characters is ready to provide you with a fate worse than death, whatever that means.

I'd got behind the tailers, one across the street, the other ahead of me on the inside of the cat I was walking in. They were after Galahad, but how would I know if they waited for me and—what do the old-timers call it?—waylaid me? Fine word, that.

And then an arm reached out of the cat and I tried to scream.

I was yanked into a doorway while

a hand clamped itself over my mouth. It was a strong soft hand, and smelled like tobacco. It forced my head against a coat that felt like tweed, and held me there.

They tell you that when the going gets tough, you'll fight. That's what I'd heard, anyway. If it's for your life, you'll fight anything. Oh, yeah? Not Gee-Gee. She went as limp as a Kleenex, she couldn't have whipped a wet butterfly. The starch went out of my knees, and if he hadn't hung on to me I'd've probably busted a leg. He dragged me down three steps into a doorway, and just as I got my shoulders all set for the knife, he whispered:

"Shh! It's me!"

YOU'D be surprised how quick I quit being a sad sack and stood on my own feet. It wasn't what he said, it was just that there wasn't any sudden death in his voice. It was soft, and kind, but full of stuff. His whisper was like the hand that he had over my mouth, the hand that I was hanging onto, even though I didn't know who he was.

That wasn't true. I knew. I don't know how, but I knew. It was Sir Galahad, and somehow he'd managed to get behind the Rover boys. I couldn't see him, but I knew.

We stood there for a minute, with me trying to get myself located. I was still whirling around in that space of pictures that had built in my mind the minute I'd been grabbed, and when I started to come out of it, I got mad.

"You trying to choke me to death?" I said.

"Not so loud!" he whispered. "They'll be coming back as soon as they find they lost me."

I dropped my own voice to a whisper. "Let's get outa here, then. I don't know what they want, or you, either, but I don't like it."

"I'm staying here," he said. "I have to go through with this."

"Not me, brother," I told him. "You can have your dough. I'd rather stay all together. And the way those guys were walking, I don't think my chances would be so hot."

I could feel him cool off. "Thank you very much," he said, "for what you've done. I had no right to expect it."

"Shucks," I said. "That's all right, stranger. The next time you got ten grand to toss around—"

He clamped his hand over my mouth again. It didn't smell of tobacco. A one-handed smoker, apparently.

"They're coming!" he said. He took his hand away.

I could hear the footsteps again, and a murmur of voices. They were walking together, and on our side of the street.

We could make a run for it, or we could stand still.

I was a good runner when I was a kid. I was anchor-girl on the Fourth Grade girl's relay team. But I couldn't outrun a bullet. And if we stood still, they'd find us. Sir Galahad's tweed was light enough to show up. They'd find us anyway,

even if he was all over tar. I could hear them go twenty feet or so, then stop.

It was easy to figure they were looking in doorways and between buildings, and feeling in places they couldn't see.

So that put it up to me. I figured fast, and pulled Galahad's head down to mine. His hair smelled clean and soapy.

"Lissen," I whispered. "Suppose I step out and ask 'em for a match or something, and then you—"

He nodded his head and gave me a little push. So I stepped out on the sidewalk and waited.

I'd always wondered, of course, how it would feel to make a pitch to a man on a dark street; things had been tough enough now and then to make me wonder. I never had reached the point, quite, but I'd thought about it.

I'd tried to figure what I'd do if I got socked, or he called a cop, or just plain told me to go to hell. And those things seemed tougher than anything else that could happen to me.

But here I was, ready to make a pickup. And here they came!

"Hel-lo, boys," I said. "Got a match?"

I put bells in it. I put all the propositions since Adam and Eve in it. It was easy.

"Naw," one of 'em said. "One side, sister."

"Don't be like *that*," I said, and you could hear the honey flowing. "We could be friendly if—"

SOCK!

It sounded like a baseball bat when a guy smacks a long one. And it was a homer. One of the Rover boys sort of went up in the air. If there'd been any light, you could have seen the tacks in his shoes. Before he landed on his head with a sound like a ripe watermelon, there was another *crack*!

Two down, none to go. Galahad stood beside me, breathing kind of hard. He put an arm around me.

"Let's go," he said.

"Where?"

"To a phone. Hurry! They'll come to eventually."

Well, I was in this too far not to go all the way. I put on my shoes, and we tore back to 163rd and into a drugstore. I sat at the counter while he phoned, and I thought the least he could do would be to buy me a coke, so I ordered one.

I didn't even get the straw to my mouth before he tore back and grabbed my arm. "We'll miss our train," he said in a loud voice. He tossed a coin on the counter. "You haven't time to waste here."

He was like a man pulling a wagon, and I was the wagon. He dragged me out at top speed, turned towards the subway for a few feet, ran across the street, and then away from the subway.

"Hey!" I said. "What train?"

"Don't talk! Run!"

So we ran. We ran for about twelve blocks, this way and that. Good thing I'd had all that training

in the Fourth Grade. Then we slowed to a fast walk, and he headed for an all-night restaurant. He pushed me into a booth, and sat down across from me.

As soon as I got my breath, I said: "What's this all about?"

He grinned, in just the way I'd remembered. He really was a handsome devil. The luck of Gee-Gee Lewis, I thought. What'll happen this time to louse it up?

Nothing I would say, if I could help it. I waited.

"That routine at the drugstore?" he asked. "They probably traced the call while I was telling them where the bodies were. I didn't want 'em to find me there, because I couldn't see any point in involving you."

"They? Who are they?"

He blinked.

"Why, the cops, of course."

It was my turn to blink.

"Could you put it in English, big boy?"

HE GRINNED again, and my heart said: "Ulp!"

"Let's order first," he said, and crooked a finger at a waitress who darn near broke a leg getting to us in a hurry. Whadda you think I ordered?

That's right. With onions.

"Now," he said. "You still have the money, of course."

I reached for my purse, but he stopped me.

"Not yet," he said. "Plenty of time."

He drummed on the table with his

fingers for a second or two.

"This sounds wacky," he said, finally, "but this is how it is. There's a lot of hungry kids in a country called Greece. You know where Greece is?"

"Just across Brooklyn Bridge?" I hazarded. The gag wasn't good, and it got what it deserved.

"Nope," he said. "Greece is where the people fought the krauts so hard and so well that they let the country go to hell and now there's nothing to eat. Especially for the kids."

"I know," I said, and I wasn't gagging.

"I know what the Greeks did," I told him.

"I'm a Greek," he said, proudly.

I didn't say anything, and he went on, "The—what did you call 'em—Rover Boys are a pair of cheap crooks. Don't ask me how they found out that I'm collecting dough for the United Greek Relief Fund, and that I was due to pick up a big contribution tonight. Obviously, they did find out."

"But nobody wants kids to starve," I said.

His eyes got black and glittery. "They wouldn't care."

"I don't like that," I said.

"Nor I," he said. "Anyway, I collected this dough, and was on my way to the bank with it when I had my first brush with the Rover Boys. That was a pleasant meeting." He smiled, sort of twisted like. "You'd have enjoyed that."

"But why," I asked, "did you put

the money in my purse?"

"Well, I thought that I would be able to get word to you that it was for the Greek kids. So, even if I got knocked off, you could handle it. They didn't suspect you. You saw that when you stopped 'em."

"How'd you know I wouldn't take a powder?"

"I didn't," he said. "I took a chance. Things were getting sort of tough, they were right on my heels, when that lug snatched your purse. I just took advantage of it. Then I thought it might be a good trick to lure 'em up Jerome. It's dark there."

"Dark ain't a word for it."

He reached over and took my hand, and I could've whipped anybody that tried to break that up.

"You were swell," he said. "Some little kids are gonna be able to eat, because of you."

The waitress brought our orders, and that food was, well, it was just something you can't tell about. The steak was two inches thick, and when I stuck a fork in it, the juice spurted out.

"You were hungry," he said.

"Just healthy, Mac."

"My name's Joe—Joe Crispos. Funny name, huh?"

"Hello, Joe. I'm Gee-Gee. Funny name, huh?"

I got another grin, for that.

"Hi. Well, look, we've got a law in Greece that says whoever finds money can keep ten percent. So I figure that's yours."

"Yeah? How much?"

"Well, there's about fifty thou-

sand in that roll. So that would make it around five thousand."

Fifty G's! Ten grand, I'd guessed, maybe.

Nobody could blame me for choking. Me and my nickel! I cut another hunk of steak and held it up.

"I don't wanta be noble," I said.

"But I like kids, see? So this is my percentage."

I waved the hunk of steak, and popped it into my mouth.

"Thank you, Gee-Gee," he said, and my heart flipped over again.

"Think nothing of it, big boy."

"But I do think a lot of it. And I hope," he said like a little boy asking for his fourth piece of candy, "I'm going to see you again—after I take you home, of course."

I didn't ham it. I let him have it, and I meant it.

"I don't mind, big boy."

Listeners in Washington, D. C. can well claim that "Suspense" lived up to its title more for them than listeners anywhere else. During "Fury and Sound" Station WTOP in the capital blew a transmitter fuse during the last three minutes of the show, leaving thousands of listeners in real suspense as to the identity of the killer. The next day the Washington Post carried in its news columns the explanation and conclusion of the show!
